

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025**

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SENATE BILL 656

Short Title: Cosmetic Art Deregulation. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Moffitt, Grafstein, and Bradley (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 26, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO EXEMPT NATURAL HAIR CARE SERVICES, BLOW-DRY STYLING, AND
MAKEUP ARTISTRY FROM LICENSING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE NORTH
CAROLINA BOARD OF COSMETIC ART EXAMINERS; TO CONVERT THE
MANDATORY NATURAL HAIR CARE SPECIALIST LICENSE TO A VOLUNTARY
CERTIFICATE; AND TO EXPAND AUTHORIZED SETTINGS FOR CERTAIN
COSMETIC ART SERVICES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**PART I. EXEMPTIONS FROM COSMETIC ART LICENSING REQUIREMENTS AND
CONVERSION TO VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION FOR NATURAL HAIR CARE
SPECIALISTS**

SECTION 1.(a) G.S. 88B-2 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-2. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Chapter:

- (1) Apprentice. – A person who is not a manager or operator and who is engaged in learning the practice of cosmetic art under the direction and supervision of a cosmetologist.
- (1a) Blow-dry styling. – The act of shampooing, conditioning, drying, arranging, curling, straightening, or styling hair using only mechanical devices, hair sprays, and topical agents, such as balms, oils, serums, and providing no other services requiring a license under this Chapter. This term includes the use and styling of wigs, hair pieces, and extensions. This term does not include the use of chemicals to alter the structure of the hair and haircutting.
- (2) Board. – The North Carolina Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners.
- (3) Booth. – A workstation located within a licensed cosmetic art shop that is operated primarily by one individual in performing cosmetic art services for consumers.
- (4) Booth renter. – A person who rents a booth in a cosmetic art shop.
- (4a) Certified natural hair care specialist. – An individual certified by the Board to practice only the part of cosmetic art that constitutes natural hair care, as defined in this section. Certification shall not be required by the Board to practice natural hair care, but an individual who meets the credentials for the certificate may apply to the Board for certification.
- (5) Cosmetic art. – All or any part or combination of cosmetology, esthetics, natural hair care, or manicuring, including the systematic manipulation with



- the hands or mechanical apparatus of the scalp, face, neck, shoulders, hands, and feet. Practices included within this subdivision shall not include the practice of massage or bodywork therapy as set forth in Article 36 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (6) Cosmetic art school. – Any building or part thereof where cosmetic art is taught.
- (7) Cosmetic art shop. – Any building or part thereof where cosmetic art is practiced for pay or reward, whether direct or indirect.
- (8) Cosmetologist. – Any individual who is licensed to practice all parts of cosmetic art.
- (8a) Cosmetology. – The act of arranging, dressing, curling, waving, cleansing, cutting, singeing, bleaching, coloring, or similar work upon the hair of a person by any means, including the use of hands, mechanical or electrical apparatus, or appliances or by use of cosmetic or chemical preparations or antiseptics.
- (9) Cosmetology teacher. – An individual licensed by the Board to teach all parts of cosmetic art.
- (10) Esthetician. – An individual licensed by the Board to practice only that part of cosmetic art that constitutes skin care.
- (11) Esthetician teacher. – An individual licensed by the Board to teach only that part of cosmetic art that constitutes skin care.
- (11a) Esthetics. – Refers to any of the following practices: giving facials; applying makeup; performing skin care; removing superfluous hair from the body of a person by use of creams, tweezers, or waxing; applying eyelashes to a person, including the application of eyelash extensions, brow or lash color; beautifying the face, neck, arms, or upper part of the human body by use of cosmetic preparations, antiseptics, tonics, lotions, or creams; surface manipulation in relation to skin care; or cleaning or stimulating the face, neck, ears, arms, hands, bust, torso, legs, or feet of a person by means of hands, devices, apparatus, or appliances along with the use of cosmetic preparations, antiseptics, tonics, lotions, or creams.
- (12) Manicuring. – The care and treatment of the fingernails, toenails, cuticles on fingernails and toenails, and the hands and feet, including the decoration of the fingernails and the application of nail extensions and artificial nails. The term "manicuring" shall not include the treatment of pathologic conditions.
- (13) Manicurist. – An individual licensed by the Board to practice only that part of cosmetic art that constitutes manicuring.
- (14) Manicurist teacher. – An individual licensed by the Board to teach manicuring.
- (14a) Natural hair care. – A service that results in tension on hair strands or roots by twisting, wrapping, extending, or locking hair by hand or mechanical device. For purposes of this definition, the phrase "natural hair care" shall include the use of artificial or natural hair.
- ~~(14b) Natural hair care specialist. – An individual licensed by the Board to practice only that part of cosmetic art that constitutes natural hair care.~~
- (14c) Natural hair care teacher. – An individual licensed by the Board to teach natural hair care.
- (14d) Makeup artistry – The application of a cosmetic to enhance the appearance of the face or skin using powder, foundation, rouge, eyeshadow, eyeliner, mascara, or lipstick when providing no other services requiring a license under

1 this Chapter. This term includes the use of an airbrush to apply makeup and
2 excludes the application of permanent makeup or tattooing.

- 3 (15) Shampooing. – The application and removal of commonly used, room
4 temperature, liquid hair cleaning and hair conditioning products. Shampooing
5 does not include the arranging, dressing, waving, coloring, or other treatment
6 of the hair."

7 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 88B-10.1 reads as rewritten:

8 **"§ 88B-10.1. Qualifications for ~~licensing~~ certifying natural hair care specialists.**

9 The Board shall issue a ~~license~~ certificate to practice as a certified natural hair care specialist
10 to any individual who meets all of the following requirements:

- 11 (1) Successful completion of at least 300 hours of a natural hair care curriculum
12 in an approved cosmetic art school.
13 (2) Passage of an examination conducted by the Board.
14 (3) Payment of the fees required by G.S. 88B-20.

15 A certificate shall not be required to practice as a natural hair care specialist but shall be
16 required for an individual to hold himself or herself out as or advertise as a certified natural hair
17 care specialist."

18 **SECTION 1.(c)** G.S. 88B-11 reads as rewritten:

19 **"§ 88B-11. Qualifications for licensing teachers.**

20 ...

21 (e) The Board shall issue a license to practice as a natural hair care teacher to any
22 individual who meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this section and who meets all of the
23 following:

- 24 (1) Holds in good standing a certified natural hair care ~~license~~ certificate issued
25 by the Board.
26 (2) Submits proof of either practice as a certified natural hair care specialist in a
27 cosmetic art shop or any Board-approved employment capacity in the
28 cosmetic art industry for a period equivalent to one year of full-time work
29 immediately prior to application or successful completion of at least 320 hours
30 of a teacher curriculum in an approved cosmetic art school.
31 (3) Passes an examination for teachers conducted by the Board."

32 **SECTION 1.(d)** G.S. 88B-12 reads as rewritten:

33 **"§ 88B-12. Temporary employment permit; extensions; limits on practice.**

34 (a) The Board shall issue a temporary employment permit to an applicant for licensure
35 as an apprentice, cosmetologist, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or manicurist who meets
36 all of the following:

- 37 (1) Has completed the required hours of a cosmetic art school curriculum in the
38 area in which the applicant wishes to be licensed.
39 (2) Has applied to take the examination within three months of completing the
40 required hours.
41 (3) Is qualified to take the examination.

42 (b) A temporary employment permit shall expire six months from the date of graduation
43 from a cosmetic art school and shall not be renewed.

44 (c) The holder of a temporary employment permit may practice cosmetic art only under
45 the supervision of a licensed cosmetologist, manicurist, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or esthetician,
46 as appropriate, and may not operate a cosmetic art shop."

47 **SECTION 1.(e)** G.S. 88B-13 reads as rewritten:

48 **"§ 88B-13. Applicants licensed in other states.**

49 (a) The Board shall issue a license to an applicant licensed as an apprentice,
50 cosmetologist, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or manicurist in another state or a

certificate to an applicant licensed or certified as a natural hair care specialist in another state, if the applicant shows:

- (1) The applicant is an active practitioner in good standing.
- (2) The applicant has practiced at least one of the three years immediately preceding the application for a ~~license~~license or certificate.
- (3) There is no disciplinary proceeding or unresolved complaint pending against the applicant at the time a license or certificate is to be issued by this State.
- (4) The licensure or certification requirements in the state in which the applicant is licensed or certified are substantially equivalent to those required by this State.

(b) Instead of meeting the requirements in subsection (a) of this section, any applicant who is licensed as a cosmetologist, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or manicurist in another state shall be admitted to practice in this State under the same reciprocity or comity provisions that the state in which the applicant is licensed grants to persons licensed in this State. Instead of meeting the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, any applicant who is licensed or certified as a natural hair care specialist in another state may be designated a certified natural care specialist by the Board under the same reciprocity or comity provisions that the state in which the applicant is licensed or certified grants to persons certified in this State.

(c) The Board may establish standards for issuing a license to an applicant who is licensed as a teacher in another state. These standards shall include a requirement that the licensure requirements in the state in which the teacher is licensed shall be substantially equivalent to those required in this State and that the applicant shall be licensed by the Board to practice in the area in which the applicant is licensed to teach."

SECTION 1.(f) G.S. 88B-14 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-14. Licensing of cosmetic art shops.

(a) The Board shall issue a license to operate a cosmetic art shop to any applicant who submits a properly completed application, on a form approved by the Board, pays the required fee, and is determined, after inspection, to be in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter and the Board's rules.

(b) The applicant shall list all licensees and all certified natural hair care specialists who practice cosmetic art in the shop and shall identify each as an employee or a booth renter.

(c) A cosmetic art shop shall be allowed to operate for a period of 30 days while the Board inspects and determines the shop's compliance with this Chapter and the Board's rules. If the Board is unable to complete the inspection within 30 days, the shop will be authorized to operate until such an inspection can be completed.

(d) A license to operate a cosmetic art shop shall not be transferable from one location to another or from one owner to another.

(e) A license to operate a cosmetic art shop shall not be required if the cosmetic art services provided in the shop are exclusively natural hair care, blow-dry styling, or makeup artistry, and the persons providing these services are exempt from licensure pursuant to G.S. 88B-25(6). However, if a shop provides natural hair care performed by a certified natural hair care specialist, the Board may inspect those areas of the shop or booths where certified natural hair care specialists practice, limited solely to ensuring compliance with any sanitary management and physical requirements that may be adopted by the Board pursuant to G.S. 88B-4."

SECTION 1.(g) G.S. 88B-18 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-18. Examinations.

(a) Repealed by Session Laws 2006-212, s. 2, effective August 8, 2006.

(b) Each examination shall have both a practical and a written portion.

(c) Examinations for applicants for apprentice, cosmetologist, teacher, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, and manicurist licenses and certified natural hair care specialist

certificates shall be given in at least three locations in the State that are geographically scattered. The examinations shall be administered in Board-approved facilities.

(d) An applicant for a cosmetologist, esthetician, manicurist, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or teacher's license or certified natural hair care specialist certificate who fails to pass the examination three times may not reapply to take the examination again until after the applicant has successfully completed any additional requirements prescribed by the Board."

SECTION 1.(h) G.S. 88B-20 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-20. Fees required.

(a) The Board may charge the applicant the actual cost of preparation, administration, and grading of examinations for cosmetologists, apprentices, manicurists, estheticians, certified natural hair care specialist, ~~specialist~~, or teachers, in addition to its other fees.

...

(c) The Board may charge license fees as follows:

- | | | |
|------|---|------------------------------|
| (1) | Cosmetologist..... | \$ 39.00 every 3 years |
| (2) | Apprentice..... | \$ 10.00 per year |
| (3) | Esthetician..... | \$ 10.00 per year |
| (4) | Manicurist | \$ 10.00 per year |
| (4a) | Natural hair care specialist | \$ 10.00 per year |
| (5) | Teacher..... | \$ 10.00 every 2 years |
| (6) | Cosmetic art shop per active booth | \$ 3.00 per year |
| (7) | Cosmetic art school..... | \$ 50.00 per year |
| (8) | Duplicate license | \$ 1.00. |

(c1) The Board may charge certification fees as follows:

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------------|
| (1) | <u>Certified natural hair care specialist.....</u> | <u>\$ 10.00 per year.</u> |
| (2) | <u>Duplicate certificate.....</u> | <u>\$ 1.00.</u> |

(d) The Board may require payment of late fees and reinstatement fees as follows:

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| (1) | Apprentice, <u>certified natural hair care specialist</u> , cosmetologist, esthetician, manicurist, natural hair care specialist , and teacher late renewal..... | \$ 10.00 |
| (2) | Cosmetic art schools and shops late renewal | \$ 10.00 |
| (3) | Reinstatement – cosmetic art schools and shops | \$ 25.00. |

(e) The Board may prorate fees as appropriate."

SECTION 1.(i) G.S. 88B-21 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-21. Renewals; expired licenses; inactive status.

(a) Each license to operate a cosmetic art shop shall be renewed on or before the first day of February of each year. As provided in G.S. 88B-20, a late fee shall be charged for licenses renewed after February 1. Any license not renewed by March 1 of each year shall expire. A cosmetic art shop whose license has been expired for one year or less shall have the license reinstated immediately upon payment of the reinstatement fee, the late fee, and all unpaid license fees. The licensee shall submit to the Board, as a part of the renewal process, a list of all licensed cosmetologists who practice cosmetic art in the shop and shall identify each as an employee or a booth renter.

(b) Cosmetologist licenses shall be renewed on or before October 1 every three years beginning October 1, 1998. A late fee shall be charged for renewals after that date. Any license not renewed shall expire on October 1 of the year that renewal is required. The Board may develop and implement a plan for staggered license renewal and may prorate license fees to implement such a plan.

(c) Apprentice, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, and manicurist ~~licenses~~ licenses, and certified natural hair care specialist certificates shall be renewed annually on or before October 1 of each year. A late fee shall be charged for the renewal of licenses after that date. Any license not renewed shall expire on October 1 of that year.

(d) Teacher licenses shall be renewed every two years on or before October 1. A late fee shall be charged for the renewal of licenses after that date. Any license not renewed shall expire on October 1 of that year.

(e) Prior to renewal of a ~~license~~, license or certificate, a teacher, cosmetologist, esthetician, certified natural hair care specialist, or manicurist shall annually complete eight hours of Board-approved continuing education for each year of the licensing cycle. A cosmetologist may complete up to 24 hours of required continuing education at any time within the cosmetologist's three-year licensing cycle. Licensees shall submit written documentation to the Board showing that they have satisfied the requirements of this subsection. A licensee or certificate holder, if applicable, who is in active practice as a cosmetologist, esthetician, certified natural hair care specialist, or manicurist, has practiced for at least 10 consecutive years in that profession, and is 60 years of age or older does not have to meet the continuing education requirements of this subsection. A licensee who is in active practice as a cosmetologist and has at least 20 consecutive years of experience as a cosmetologist, does not have to meet the continuing education requirements of this subsection, but shall report any continuing education classes completed to the Board, whether the continuing education classes are Board-approved or not. Promotion of products and systems shall be allowed at continuing education given in-house or at trade shows. Continuing education classes may also be offered in secondary languages as needed. No member of the Board may offer continuing education courses as required by this section.

(f) If an apprentice, cosmetologist, esthetician, manicurist, certified natural hair care specialist, or teacher fails to renew his or her license or certificate, as applicable, within five years following the expiration date, the licensee or certificate holder shall be required to pass an examination as prescribed by the Board before the license or certificate will be reinstated.

(g) Cosmetic art school licenses shall be renewed on or before October 1 of each year. A late fee shall be charged for licenses renewed after that date. Any license not renewed by November 1 of that year shall expire. A cosmetic art school whose license has been expired for one year or less shall have its license reinstated upon payment of the reinstatement fee, the late fee, and all unpaid license fees.

(h) Upon request by a licensee or certificate holder for inactive status, the Board may place the licensee's or certificate holder's name on the inactive list so long as the licensee or certificate holder is in good standing with the Board. An inactive licensee or certificate holder is not required to complete continuing education requirements. An inactive licensee shall not practice cosmetic art for consideration. An inactive certificate holder shall not hold themselves out or advertise as a certified natural hair care specialist while on inactive status but may continue to practice natural hair care. However, the inactive licensee or certificate holder may continue to purchase supplies as accorded an active ~~licensee~~, licensee or certificate holder. When the inactive licensee or certificate holder desires to be removed from the inactive list and return to active practice, the inactive licensee or certificate holder shall notify the Board of his or her desire to return to active status and pay the required fee as determined by the Board. As a condition of returning to active status, the Board may require the licensee or certificate holder to complete eight to 24 hours of continuing education pursuant to subsection (e) of this section."

SECTION 1.(j) G.S. 88B-22 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-22. Licenses required; criminal penalty.

(a) Except as provided in this Chapter, no person may practice or attempt to practice cosmetic art for pay or reward in any form, either directly or indirectly, without being licensed as an apprentice, cosmetologist, esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or manicurist by the Board.

(b) Except as provided in this Chapter, no person may practice cosmetic art or any part of cosmetic art, for pay or reward in any form, either directly or indirectly, outside of a licensed cosmetic art shop.

(c) ~~No~~ Except as provided in this Chapter, no person may open or operate a cosmetic art shop in this State unless a license has been issued by the Board for that shop.

(d) An individual licensed as an esthetician, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, or manicurist may practice only that part of cosmetic art for which the individual is licensed. An individual certified as a certified natural hair care specialist may practice only natural hair care or services exempt under this Chapter.

(d1) No person may teach cosmetic art in a Board-approved cosmetic art school unless the person is a teacher licensed under this Chapter. A guest lecturer may be exempt from the requirements of this subsection upon approval by the Board.

(d2) Except as provided in this Chapter, no individual may use the title "certified natural hair care specialist" unless the individual holds a certified natural hair care specialist certificate.

(e) An apprentice licensed under the provisions of this Chapter shall apprentice under the direct supervision of a cosmetologist. An apprentice shall not operate a cosmetic art shop.

(f) A violation of this Chapter is a Class 3 misdemeanor."

SECTION 1.(k) G.S. 88B-23 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-23. Licenses to be posted.

(a) Every apprentice, cosmetologist, esthetician, manicurist, ~~natural hair care specialist~~, and teacher licensed under this Chapter and every certified natural hair care specialist shall display the certificate of license or certified natural hair care specialist certificate issued by the Board within the shop in which the person works.

(b) Every certificate of license to operate a cosmetic art shop or school shall be conspicuously posted in the shop or school for which it is issued."

SECTION 1.(l) G.S. 88B-24 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-24. Revocation of licenses and other disciplinary measures.

The Board may restrict, suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue, renew, or reinstate any license or certificate for any of the following:

- (1) Conviction of a felony shown by certified copy of the record of the court of conviction.
- (2) Gross malpractice or gross incompetency as determined by the Board.
- (3) Advertising by means of knowingly false or deceptive statements.
- (4) Permitting any individual to practice cosmetic art without a license or temporary employment permit, with an expired license or temporary employment permit, or with an invalid license or temporary employment ~~permit~~ permit, if licensure is required under this Chapter.
- (5) Obtaining or attempting to obtain a license for money or other thing of value other than the required fee or by fraudulent misrepresentation.
- (6) Practicing or attempting to practice by fraudulent misrepresentation.
- (7) Willful failure to display a certificate of license or certificate as required by G.S. 88B-23.
- (8) Willful violation of the rules adopted by the Board.
- (9) Violation of ~~G.S. 86A-15~~ G.S. 86B-31 or G.S. 86B-32 by ~~a cosmetologist, esthetician, natural hair care specialist, or manicurist~~ any person licensed or certified by the Board and Board, or any person practicing cosmetic art under an exemption pursuant to G.S. 88B-25(6), while providing cosmetic art services in a barber shop.

SECTION 1.(m) G.S. 88B-25 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-25. Exemptions.

The following persons are exempt from the provisions of this Chapter while engaged in the proper discharge of their professional duties:

- (1) Undertakers and funeral establishments licensed under G.S. 90-210.25.

- (2) Persons authorized to practice medicine or surgery under Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (3) Nurses licensed under Chapter 90 of the General Statutes.
- (4) Commissioned medical or surgical officers of the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine, or Coast Guard.
- (5) A person employed in a cosmetic art shop whose duties are expressly confined to the shampooing or blow drying of hair, provided that the person shall comply with rules adopted by the Board relating to sanitary management of cosmetic art shops.
- (6) A person providing only natural hair care, makeup artistry, or blow-dry styling, provided the person completes a one-time four-hour course on sanitation and safety that is offered or approved by the Board prior to providing services under this exemption. Such person shall maintain a record of completion of the course in a manner prescribed by the Board. The Board shall make available at least one qualifying course on its website, free of charge."

PART II. AUTHORIZED PRACTICE SETTINGS

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 88B-15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 88B-15. Practice outside cosmetic art shops.

(a) Any individual licensed or certified under this ~~Chapter~~ Chapter, or any individual exempt from licensure when providing natural hair care, blow-dry styling, or makeup artistry pursuant to G.S. 88B-25(6), may visit the residences of individuals who are sick or disabled and confined to their places of residence in order to attend to their cosmetic needs. A licensed individual Such individuals may also visit hospitals, nursing homes, rest homes, retirement homes, mental institutions, correctional facilities, funeral homes, ~~and similar institutions~~ institutions, and other venues such as event locations to attend to the cosmetic needs of those ~~in these institutions receiving services~~. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to limit the locations at which an individual exempt from licensure may provide natural hair care, blow-dry styling, or makeup artistry.

(b) ~~An~~ Any individual licensed or certified under this ~~Chapter~~ Chapter, or any individual exempt from licensure pursuant to G.S. 88B-25(6), may practice in a licensed barbershop as permitted by G.S. 86A-14.G.S. 86B-32."

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 86B-32 reads as rewritten:

"§ 86B-32. Persons exempt from the provisions of this Article.

The following persons are exempt from the provisions of this Article while engaged in the proper discharge of their duties:

- (1) Persons authorized under the laws of the State to practice medicine and surgery, and those working under their supervision.
- (2) Commissioned medical or surgical officers of the United States Army or other components of the Armed Forces of the United States, and those working under their supervision.
- (3) Registered nurses and licensed practical nurses and those working under their supervision.
- (4) Licensed embalmers and funeral directors and those working under their supervision.
- (5) Persons who are working in licensed cosmetic shops or beauty schools and are licensed by the State Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners pursuant to Chapter 88B of the General Statutes.
- (6) Persons who are working in barbershops and are licensed or otherwise authorized (certified or exempt from licensure) by the State Board of Cosmetic

Art Examiners pursuant to Chapter 88B of the General Statutes, provided that those persons shall comply with G.S. 86B-31.

(7) Inmates under the jurisdiction of the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction.

(8) Persons who are employed by barbershops and whose duties are expressly confined to the shampooing or blow drying of hair, provided that the person shall comply with G.S. 86B-31."

SECTION 2.(c) Rulemaking. – The North Carolina Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners may adopt rules to implement subsection (a) of this section. The North Carolina Board of Barber and Electrolysis Examiners may adopt rules to implement subsection (b) of this section.

PART III. TRANSITION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3.(a) Transition from Licenses to Certificates. – The following provisions shall govern the transition from natural hair care specialist licenses previously required for practice under Chapter 88B of the General Statutes to certified natural hair care specialist certificates, which are voluntary and not required for practice, under this act:

(1) Automatic conversion. – All individuals holding valid natural hair care specialist licenses issued by the North Carolina Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners as of the effective date of this act shall automatically be deemed to hold the equivalent certified natural hair care specialist certificates under Chapter 88B of the General Statutes, as amended by this act, without further examination, application, fees, or additional qualification requirements. These certificates confer the title of "certified natural hair care specialist" but are not required to engage in natural hair care services. Holders of these new certificates may continue to provide natural hair care services to the same extent as they did under the previously held licenses, but possession of the certificate is no longer a condition to practice.

(2) Pending applications. – Any application for a natural hair care specialist license submitted to the Board prior to the effective date of this act and still pending on that date shall be processed and granted as an application for a certified natural hair care specialist certificate, unless the application does not meet the requirements for certification under Chapter 88B of the General Statutes, as amended by this act. No resubmission or additional qualifications shall be required solely because of the change in designation from license to certificate under this section. Any certificate issued under this subdivision shall be approved under the same conditions and standards that applied to licensure immediately prior to the effective date of this act.

(3) Renewal of certificates. – Upon expiration of a natural hair care specialist license converted into a certificate under subdivision (1) of this section, the Board shall permit individuals to renew their credential under the standards applicable to certified natural hair care specialist certificates in accordance with the renewal provisions of G.S. 88B-21, as amended by this act. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require an individual to renew the certificate in order to continue practicing natural hair care services. Renewal merely maintains the use of the "certified natural hair care specialist" designation.

SECTION 3.(b) Rulemaking. – The North Carolina Board of Cosmetic Art Examiners may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this act. The Board shall prominently post on its publicly available website information about the exemption created by Section 1(m) of this act, the requirements for completion of the sanitation course necessary for exempt

- 1 practitioners under G.S. 88B-25(6), and clear instructions for accessing at least one free
2 Board-approved sanitation course that satisfies these requirements.
3 **SECTION 3.(c)** Effective Date. – This act becomes effective October 1, 2025.